preceded the triumph of Ch'in and by the policies of Shih Huang Ti, was dealt further blows. The former distinction between it and the commoners was passing. The manners of the old nobility tended more and more to be adopted by the lower classes. New divisions between the rich and the poor were appearing.

Like Shih Huang Ti, Wu Ti strove to exalt the authority of the throne. To this end, he developed a system whose rudiments seem to have existed before his time for discovering and choosing men of promise. On at least one occasion he awarded a prize to him who gave the best advice on the art of government. He commanded local officials to recommend those in their jurisdictions who were the most virtuous and surrounded himself with men renowned for their wisdom. The beginnings of the competitive examination for the choice of the worthy for office seem to date from his reign, although Wu Ti and his successors did not utilize it as extensively as did some later dynasties. Wu Ti instituted a higher school at the capital for the training of future officials, and schools were encouraged in the local provinces and districts. This was not entirely an innovation, to be sure, for schools were to be found in the Chou dynasty and possibly earlier. It was, however, a further expansion of the time-honored system.

This policy, extended and elaborated by later rulers and dynasties, was to grow into that bureaucracy and official hierarchy which was to be one of the outstanding features of the Chinese state—the device by which the great area of China was held together and administered. It cannot be attributed solely to Wu Ti. The Ch'in, and especially Shih Huang Ti, did more to create it

than he, the earlier monarchs of the Han employed the principle, and the roots of it go back into Chou and possibly into pre-Chou times. For example, some of its basic concepts are to be found in the writings of more than one of the Chou schools and probably were not original with any one man. Wu Ti, however, was astute enough to see the importance of the system and to add to its practical application.

The court presented a mixture of several of the philosophical schools. It was deeply interested in the magical side of popular Taoism, as had been Shih Huang Ti, and several of the administrative devices of the Emperor smacked strongly of Legalism, Wu Ti, however, showed favor to the adherents of Confucianism.